

Scripture Passage: 1 John 4:7-12

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:10

Theme Song: This Is Love

Big Idea: God showed us what love really is by sending Jesus to die for us.

## READ

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Read 1 John 4:7-12 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

### 1 John 4:7-12

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

## SING

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Play "This Is Love" from the *Doorpost Songs: This Is Love* album and sing together. If you have small children, find a toy instrument and let them bang away! If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

## MEMORIZE

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Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

### Long Version (1 John 4:10)

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

### Short Version (1 John 4:10)

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us.

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## **LEARN**

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Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

### **What's the Big Idea?**

God showed us what love really is by sending Jesus to die for us.

### **Family Devotional**

Have you ever watched a two-year old use an iPad?

It's amazing! They're not even potty-trained and they use those chubby little fingers to open up Netflix and watch Mickey Mouse Clubhouse in the blink of an eye! How in the world does a two year-old learn how to use an iPad?

They learn by example. They have to watch someone do it first. Many times it's an older brother or sister. And older brother or sister had to learn from someone, too. Maybe they learned from Mom or Dad.

Now let me ask you a question. How did you learn to love? Loving other people doesn't come naturally to us. We're not born knowing how to love. Instead, we have to be taught by example. I bet there's someone in your life who made you feel loved, and showed you how to love someone. But where did that person learn to love? Well, there's probably someone who taught that person - and another person who taught the person before that - and then on and on and on in a never ending chain of people teaching each other to love.

But where does the chain start?

The Bible tells us in 1 John 4 that the chain begins with God. God is the one who shows everyone how to love! "This is love," verse 10 says. "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us." And he showed us his love by sending his son Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. (That's what "atoning sacrifice" means.)

And here's the cool thing: when we love each other, it lets people see God living in us! When older brother teaches younger sister to use the iPad, in a way Mom and Dad are living through him, because they were the ones who taught him to use it in the first place. The fact that older brother knows how to use the iPad points to someone bigger, older, and wiser than himself. It points back to Mom or Dad.

And in the same way, when you love someone it points back to someone bigger, older, and wiser than you. It points to God. When we love

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each other, we're not just doing something kind. We're showing people that God is alive!

## **TALK**

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Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. What are some of the ways that God shows his love for us? How does verse 9 answer that question? Read John 3:16 together. Do you see the similarity between verse 9 and John 3:16?
2. Some people are easy to love. Other people are more difficult to love. Can you think of someone in your life who is difficult to love? Why is it so hard? What are some ways that you can show love to that person?
3. Verse 12 tells us that "no one has ever seen God". How does our love for each other show people that God is alive?

## **PRAY**

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Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God for his love for you, which he showed by sending Jesus to take the punishment for your sin.
- Ask God to continue teaching you how to love.
- Ask God for the strength and courage to love people - even people who are difficult to love.
- Thank God for the opportunity to show other people by the way that we love each other that God is alive.